

## Relations industrielles Industrial Relations



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D'autre part, bien que l'on affirme dans l'introduction d'avoir "avoid reproducing holus-bolus work done by Tremblay, Isbester and others" (p. 9), et le fait d'avoir concentré la recherche sur le matériel imprimé entre 1950 et 1975, il n'en demeure pas moins que certains ouvrages et travaux importants ont été oubliés, travaux dont toute bibliographie sur le sujet devrait inclure (v.g. H.A. Logan, **Trade Unions in Canada, their Development and Functioning**, Toronto, MacMillan, 1948, 619 pp.).

Évidemment, un ouvrage de cette nature peut comporter, à l'occasion, quelques erreurs. Toutefois, à titre d'exemple, on peut se demander que vient faire un texte sur la satisfaction au travail dans cette bibliographie «spécialisée» (Burstein, M., cote B660, p. 24)! De plus, l'auteur de «Les formes historiques de politisation du syndicalisme au Québec», 28e Congrès des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval, **La politisation des relations du travail**, Québec, P.U.L., 1973, pp. 15-43 (cote R165, p. 83 de la bibliographie) et de «La grève du rail: partie remise ou contre-mandée?», **Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations**, Québec, vol. 16, no 1, janvier 1961, p. 83 (cote R167, p. 84 de la bibliographie) n'est pas Jerry Bruce Roald, mais bien Léo Roback, etc.

En terminant, disons simplement que cet instrument de travail demeure malgré tout fort utile. Toutefois, j'ajouterai que mon opinion rejoint celle de l'auteur de l'introduction de **Labour Companion** lorsqu'il écrit que "the WORDS definitive, complete, and comprehensive do not apply to this bibliography" (p. 9).

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**'An Impartial Umpire': Industrial Relations and the Canadian State 1900-1911**, by Paul Craven, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1980, x-386 pp. ISBN 0-8020-5505-2 bd and ISBN 0-8020-6401-9tc

Paul Craven's **'An Impartial Umpire': Industrial Relations and the Canadian State 1900-1911** sets itself a difficult task. In the absence of a general overview of pertinent aspects of the period, and with obvious holes yet to be eliminated in its historiography, the author sets out to satisfy both needs in spite of the reserves expressed here and there. In terms of his study, Craven also sets himself a dual objective. As he explains: "This study falls into two parts. The first ... examines the structural, institutional, and ideological pre-conditions for the emergence and reception of the new industrial relations policy, while the second part ... discusses that policy in its practice." (p. 9) That, in a nutshell, is what Paul Craven's book is all about.

The author's analysis provides an excellent overview and a detailed portrait of several aspects of the period through his intricate weaving together of various themes related to his objectives. Two of them, of major importance, are present throughout. The first concerns the very role of the state and its capacity (necessity) to play a role or "mediate" conflict between divergent interest groups and social classes. The second is the "managerial" revolution at the turn of the century and its corollary, the "organic" intellectuals (Gramsci), who emerged as interpreters of it. Both are debated on a philosophical level and then concretely applied.

The first chapters bring out the original objective through a "King and context" debate. Chapter one, "The Labour Problem and the Problem of Order" strikes a highly philosophical note, revealing the extent of the intellectual confrontation provoked by the reality of contemporary experience with industrial expansion and transformation as well as their significance. The second chapter, "The Intellectual Formation of Mackenzie King", homes in on the relevance of contemporary socio-economic reality and the debate it inspired for the future key man in the Department of Labour. The remaining chapters essentially add a great deal of precision, and some other dimensions to the points raised in the opening ones, and are topped off by a concise, solid conclusion.

This book is particularly interesting for several reasons: It constitutes one of the very rare analyses of government policy in industrial relations in Canada. It furnishes most useful material on the context in which industrial relations policy was first formulated at the government level. It revises substantially the Dawson-Neatby version of Mackenzie King prior to his election as Prime Minister. It provides us with many elements necessary to a fuller understanding of organized labour. And it offers several flashes of insight on the "state of the art" and problems of interpretation in our historiography. In short, it succeeds in its penetrating analysis of a difficult subject. Everywhere there is ample evidence of sound research. It is also tightly organized and tightly written. Every word counts in Craven's choice, precise vocabulary.

The limits of the study are clearly identified by the author. The accent is on the T.L.C. and C.M.A., to the complete or partial exclusion of other interest groups. The respective spheres of federal and provincial governments are not really explored. While the specific nature of the "Quebec question" is not fully developed. These problems are thus admitted and evident. If however, the criticism is raised that Craven has written a sort of "Life and Times" of young Mackenzie King, it must be explained that he did not really have any choice because of the dual objective originally set and the holes in present published research on the period.

The author can be faulted, however, for two particular things. On occasion, his analysis tends to become over-detailed, making for heavy going. Another aspect of this same problem is the elaboration of explanatory comments in footnotes, which, although often full of delightful tidbits of additional information, are not always necessary and tend to bog down the reader. Secondly, the vocabulary used, although refreshingly precise and original, becomes from time to time a little esoteric.

In concluding: While reading Craven's **Impartial Umpire**, I recalled a luncheon meeting back in 1966 at the now defunct Bytown Inn in Ottawa, with Eugene Forsey, the C.L.C. research director, Blair Neatby and Harry Thayer of the I.A.M.A.W. Lunch had just gotten under way when Thayer asked Neatby the \$64,000. question: "Do you really think Mackenzie King had a social conscience?" So much for lunch... The controversial nature of the debate around Mackenzie King's ideas and their application in government labour policy is certainly not terminated even to this day, as the recent Craven-Whitaker debate in **Labour/Le travailleur** revealed. Paul Craven's fascinating book, however, constitutes an important milestone in our understanding of them both and will doubtless help eliminate a lot of the pitfalls which have hampered our understanding of King and his impact in the past.

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